

St Mary the Virgin
Blanchland
An Archaeological Assessment
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The church from the west

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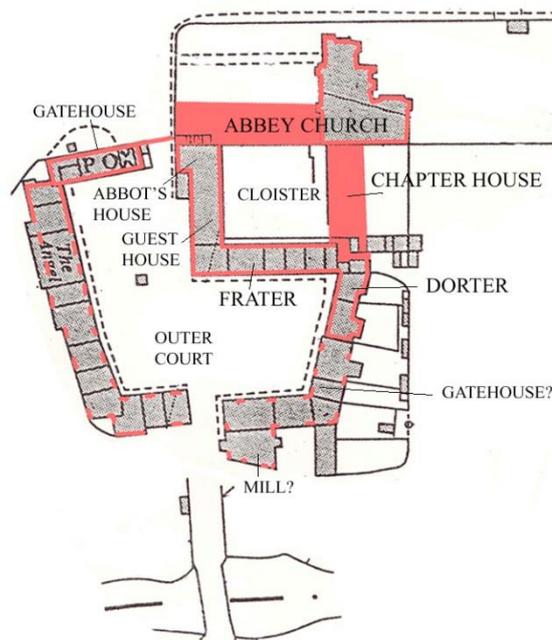
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Blanchland: St Mary the Virgin

Introduction

The village of Blanchland is remotely situated in the south-western corner of Northumberland, on the north bank of the River Derwent, which here forms the county boundary with Durham. It is the site of one of five Premonstratensian Abbeys in North-Eastern England¹, and the only one not to have the ‘shelter’ of a major castle within two or three miles. The Premonstratensian order of canons regular was founded at Prémontré near Laon in 1120 by St Norbert (hence the alternative name of ‘Norbertines’) and at the Dissolution had 35 houses in England. Blanchland is the only one of the five north-eastern Premonstratensian houses to retain part of its church as a parish church, and is also unique in the manner in which the remains of the monastic complex, both cloister and outer court, were recast in what has been termed a ‘model village’ (above right) in the late 18th or early 19th century by the Lord Crewe Trustees. Despite the importance of the site comparatively little has been published regarding it, the principal sources all dating from the late 19th century.



Description of the Church

Blanchland Abbey church is of highly unusual form, its L-plan being the result of it being formed in the mid-18th century out of the ruins of the north transept (with the tower at its north end) and eastern arm of the medieval Premonstratensian Abbey church. The fabric is a mixture of medieval, mid-18th century and late-19th century restoration (when the eastern aisle of the transept was reinstated), but the individual phases are not always easy to untangle. The fabric is coursed sandstone, ranging from near- ashlar quality to little more than

¹ The others are Alnwick, also in Northumberland, and the North Yorkshire trio of Coverham, Easby and Egglestone, Beauchief, now in South Yorkshire, was formerly in Derbyshire

rubble, with a roof of graduated sandstone flags, hipped at the angle of the transept and eastern arm.

The west elevation of the church is in three parts; to the south the 18th-century west wall of the main body of the building (now divided into two bays), in the centre the two-bay elevation of the transept and on the north the tower, which contains the entrance into the building. Main body and transept have two-light windows with pointed arches and simple Y-tracery.

The west wall of the main body is of coursed squared stone, without any quoins to its southern corner, where the rubble-built churchyard wall butts up against it²; this 18th-century masonry continues as far as a straight joint in line with the north face of a low stepped buttress fashioned out of the stub of the north wall of the medieval nave. It has a simple chamfered plinth (exposed within a perimeter drain) and two windows which have broad mullions with flat faces between paired hollow chamfers, that of the southern window much more worn. Their outer frames, with dressings that are perhaps re-used medieval work, have two broader hollow chamfers.

The transept wall has a more elaborate two-part plinth which at the south end of the wall drops to a lower level and is returned on the north face of the buttress already mentioned. The plinth has been stepped out around what looks to have been the base of a buttress midway along the wall; its upper part has gone but is evidenced by disturbed masonry in the wall above. The two windows in this part of the wall have double-chamfered mullions, but their outer orders have two small hollow chamfers with a square step between them³; their inner orders have been carried on jamb shafts, of which the moulded capitals and bases survive.

The tower has a massive lower section, square in plan with clasping buttresses at the angles, divided into three unequal stages by string courses chamfered above and moulded below; its plinth appears to be continuous with that of the transept. There is a narrower stepped buttress projecting from the south end of the west face of the south-western clasping buttress. The lower stage has a central two-centred doorway of two orders, the outer moulding with the same

² On its south face (towards the garden behind the Lord Crewe arms) the lower part of this wall preserves some fabric of the south wall of the lost nave, and the bases of the jambs of the eastern processional door, opening onto the former cloister..

³ The top three blocks of the southern jamb of the southern window have been renewed with blocks that have a single chamfer only.

moulding of two hollow chamfers with a step between as seen in the transept windows; it has a casement-moulded hood with a human head above its apex, directly below the lowest of the string courses, which rounds the narrow buttress and then is carried up to a higher level. Alongside the doorway on the north is a trefoil-arched recess, with an external rebate and evidence of door fittings (as well as a central socket in its sill). The string above has been partly cut away when structures adjacent to the tower have been built, the first apparently a chapel and the second a schoolroom. The larger of the two structures – probably the earlier chapel – appears to have had its south wall in line with the centre of the doorway (which was presumably blocked when it was built), and had its eaves level c 1.5 m above that of the second smaller structure, which had its south wall set further north. The cuts for the gabled roofs of both structures remain clear, and the wall face below them has many old graffiti; the most legible is a line c 3.5 m above the ground which reads ‘IW 1776 (?) LB ’. Between the two roof-lines is a chamfered square-headed loop lighting the newel stair within the north-western clasping buttress.

In the tall second stage of the tower is a lancet window in a surround of two chamfered orders, the inner one partly cut away to enlarge the lancet’s head into an arrow-like form; subsidiary string courses (not continued on the clasping buttresses) run below the lancet sill and are stepped up over its head as a hoodmould. Above is the second major string, and higher up a second square-headed loop in the north-west buttress. A little below the top of the lower section of the tower is another chamfered string course, possibly marking the base of an early parapet.

The upper stage of the tower, the belfry, is set back from the wall faces below, and the clasping buttresses have sloped slab caps. It is built of greyer stone than the lower stage (which has a lot of brown/yellow fabric); the belfry opening is of two cusped trefoiled lights, with a quatrefoil in the spandrel, under a damaged moulded hood. The very top of the wall looks as if it might have been rebuilt, below the square-section band at the base of the parapet, which has a simple square-edged coping, and looks post-medieval.

The north face of the tower is similar to the west, except that the north-eastern clasping buttress ends in a gabled top below the third stage. The only opening to the lower stage is a chamfered loop to the stair in the north-west buttress; the second stage has a lancet in a deep triple-chamfered surround, with a small

string carried over it as a hood, and another loop to the stair; the north elevation of the belfry is very similar to the west.

Originally there has been an additional structure, a chapel or perhaps a vestry/sacristy, attached to the east face of the tower, with the projecting tabling of its steep roof surviving, its eaves having been a c2.5 m above ground but its apex over half way up the tall middle stage of the tower⁴ The tower plinth has returned along the north wall of this structure, the cut-back scar for which remains clear c 1.5 m from the angle of the clasping buttress; within the structure there has been a simple chamfered plinth, interrupted by a central two-centred doorway of two continuous chamfered orders. Higher up the north-eastern clasping buttress has a gabled top (as on the north); on this side the belfry opening has simple uncusped tracery, the two principal lights having rough elliptical arches.



BLANCHLAND CHURCH FROM THE NORTH EAST.

Sketch of the church from the north east, after Knowles

⁴ There seems to be a disturbed area of masonry immediately to the north of the top section of this tabling.

The south side of the tower, above the transept roof, has no set back below the belfry, and its wall is of roughly-coursed rubble, not squared stone. The medieval roof tabling of the transept shows that its roof was considerably taller, and steeper than that of its 18th-century successor, its apex coming a little above the level of the sills of the belfry openings in the other walls; within the tabling, and just below its apex, is a small square-headed window in a chamfered surround.

The Transept aisle is built of squared ashlar that has a tooled finish, with smooth ashlar dressings. There is a chamfered plinth at the same level as that on the east side of the tower, with a lower one appearing on the east where the ground falls away. There are quite broad stepped buttresses at the north end of the wall and between the two windows on the east, which are each of two trefoil-headed lights, with tracery above. They and the simple lancet in the north wall have moulded hoods with trapezoidal block terminals. The east wall of the transept, above the aisle roof, shows the upper parts of two blocked windows; these have segmental-pointed heads and square-edged ashlar voussoirs.

The north wall of the chancel has a two-step chamfered plinth and a moulded string c 1.8 m up, another string being carried over the two lancet windows as a hoodmould, the western terminal of that of the western lancet being in the form of a dogtooth. There is a stepped buttress between the bays, the lancet window



in each having a surround of two chamfered orders; west of these is the cut for an earlier and taller roof to the aisle, c 1.5 m above the present one and set at a shallower angle. In the lower wall, below the first string and c 1 m east of the central buttress is an opening c 0.60 m square now infilled with rubble.

The church from the south-east

The east end of the chancel has pairs of stepped buttresses at the angles, and two further buttresses between. The wall and intermediate buttresses all look of

late-19th century date, except perhaps for the lowest courses. There is a moulded string below three lancet windows, of equal height that have a chamfer and square rebate to their inner orders, and jamb shafts with moulded capitals and bases to the outer, which carry moulded arches and a hood with shaped terminals; the gable is topped by a foliate cross terminal.

The south wall presents a large expanse of coursed and squared masonry, predominantly buff and light grey in colour. Most of it appears to be of mid-18th century date; but remains of the 13th century plinth exist over much of its length, better preserved at the east end where the base of a buttress is intact; medieval walling appears to survive to some height in the bay east of this buttress, and in the stepped buttress at the east end of the wall. To the west of the buttress base the plinth returns on a line 0.34 m further south, which Knowles⁵ interprets as indicating a thickening of the wall behind the sedilia. There are two lancet windows, one just west of the buttress base, with a double chamfered surround that probably re-uses old materials, and a more authentic one to the east, its sill at a rather lower level, with a similar surround that has broach stops at the base of its outer order and is set above a moulded string which only survives on the easternmost c 2 m of wall.



Looking north through the partially-reconstructed arch into the transept, with the tower beyond and the arcade to the transept aisle on the right

⁵ NCH 322.

The Interior

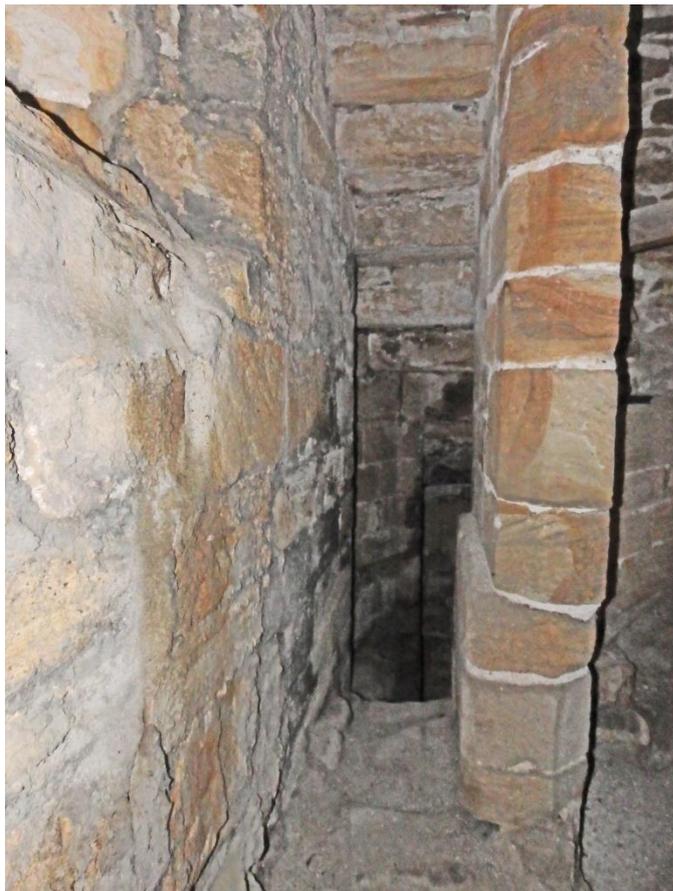
The Tower

From the main doorway five stone steps descend to the flagstone floor of the tower, which is at the same level as the main floors of the transept and western part of the main body. The segmental rear arch of the doorway is partly concealed by an internal wooden porch; the opening has a long drawbar tunnel in its south jamb and a socket in the north. Opposite in the east wall are two steps up to a doorway into the former north-eastern sacristy or vestry; this door also has a segmental rear arch, with a chamfer to the head and south jamb, and a relieving arch of thin stones directly above, which is cut into by a series of sockets as if it had once been closed by a stoothing partition. There is a drawbar socket on the north and what looks like an infilled drawbar tunnel on the south.

The internal walls of the tower are of coursed roughly-squared stone/rubble, and rise unbroken to the belfry floor. At the north end of the west wall is the door to the newel stair, which has an unusual shouldered segmental head; above it a narrow diagonally-set panel of masonry is corbelled out to accommodate the stair. The lancet windows on north and west have segmental-pointed rear arches carried on chamfered ribs, the northern with one rib flush with the internal wall face and the western with two. A little to the south of the doorway are an opposed pair of large sockets c 2 m above the floor, that on the west with a much smaller socket directly below, and that on the east more roughly shaped.

The tower opens from the transept with a lofty pointed arch of three chamfered orders, with a damaged hoodmould. Towards the transept the jambs are of the same section, with moulded capitals and bases; towards the tower the two outer orders die in to the wall.

Ascending the stair, the walls are of good ashlar, and the undersides of the treads above are at first neatly chamfered; further up these become square, and the height of the treads decreases so that the angle becomes unusually shallow for a medieval newel stair. The most unusual feature are at the head of the stair, where the newel ends, under a complex slab vault, with three steps up into a short but narrow (0.50 m) passage – its entry rebated for a door - which enters the belfry through the north side of the rear arch of the western belfry opening, the sill of which is just above floor level. The west and north belfry openings have segmental-pointed rear arches (of plain square section) and the northern,



Looking north along the narrow passage between the belfry and the head of the newel stair, surely designed with the defensive intent of restrict access.

which may have been rebuilt, one of depressed form; its internal sill has clearly been raised at some time. On either side of each opening, at just below the level of the springing of the rear arch, is a large open socket, presumably relating to earlier bell frames, and there is a further large socket higher up near the west end of the north wall. Each wall has a small off-set between 1 and 1.5 m above the floor, which may represent the upper limit of the

fabric of the earlier phase of the tower. The north-west corner is quite complex, with a projection at floor level that survives from the top of a phase 1 stair turret; high up, above the entry passage, is a big chamfered off-set. The entry passage seems of one build with the belfry. The small window on the south has its internal jambs almost square with the wall and is covered by a series of lintels. The present bellframe is a simple construction of four posts, set centrally, with various horizontal struts to the side walls providing stability; its single bell has an inscription stating that it was made in London in 1754 and recast by H. Wilson in 1878.

The Transept

In the transept, the two windows in the west wall have internal surrounds with the outer order moulded with pair of hollow chamfers and step between, and the inner with a broad chamfer, the Y-tracery having the same mouldings as it does externally.

On the east is a two-bay arcade, with two-centred arches of two chamfered orders with broach stops at their bases, carried by a heavy cylindrical pier that

has a moulded capital and a two-stepped chamfered base, and responds in the form of moulded corbels. There is a hoodmould chamfered below and moulded above, partly cut away but retaining an interesting trefoiled stop at its south end. Abutting the north end of the hoodmould is a peculiar projecting block that looks as if it might have been a springer for a vault. Above the arches are two large blocked windows (which lit the 1815 schoolroom) that have rough segmental-pointed heads, now infilled with browner stone that shows a stippled tooling; their sills cut through the tops of the hoodmoulds of the arches below.

The transept roof is of four narrow bays with simple king-post trusses that have raking struts from the base of the post to the principals, collars pegged against the south faces of the posts, and also outer struts between the tie and principals. At the south end of the roof the north wall of the main body of the church only rises as high as the eaves, with above it (and in line with its south face) a timber partition containing an old door, giving access to the roof space (not inspected) above the chancel ceiling.

The Aisle

There are two steps down into the reinstated aisle. The south end wall shows a length of plinth, with a roll moulding above a chamfer, that would seem to have originally been external, above it, towards the east end of the wall, is an aumbry with above it a recess with an old trefoiled and rebated arch, opening into a rough cavity within the wall. At the north end of the aisle there is a tall vertical straight joint c 15 cm out from the north-west corner; the outer order of the arcade arch, above the respond, shows some signs of disturbance, which again might point to a former vault. The 19th-century windows have level sills with chamfered front edges.

The Main Body of the Church/Chancel

The arch between the main body of the church and the transept is another lofty triple-chamfered one; its upper part may have been reconstructed but parts are clearly in situ as there are remains of a hoodmould. The jambs carrying the inner orders are of trefoil plan – with a square fillet to the central shaft – that have a simple chamfer to the outer order. There are moulded capitals (partly cut away) and moulded bases. The relationship between the arch respond and adjacent transept arcade is not quite clear; it looks as if the respond may pre-date the arcade. The short length of wall attached to the western respond is of

heavily-mortared rubble; low down on the south face is a patched or disturbed area.

Within the main body of the church the 18th-century west wall has a set back of c 10 cm at a height of c 1.5 m above the floor; above it the two large two-light windows have rough internal surrounds, with a hollow chamfer to the outer order. The set-back is continued along the south wall, suggesting that the walling above it (except at the east end) has all been rebuilt.



The chancel, looking east

Two steps rise into the choir (beyond the excellent early-20th century rood screen) and two more to the sanctuary, although there is a lower passage against the walls, and behind the choir stalls. From this passage on the south the sedilia can be inspected, which are largely late-19th century restoration (in Roman cement). The eastern jamb and base of the western jamb are the only original parts; they have attached shafts with moulded capitals and bases (the base of the eastern renewed). The three recesses have richly-moulded trefoil arches, with

above the intermediate piers carved hoodmould stops (a bishop left and woman right) . Further west, c 2m west of the pulpit, are the bases of the jambs of a doorway, moulded with a roll and fillet; the eastern survives to c 1 m but the western is only a single block.

Towards the east end of the south wall are two lancet windows; the western has a rear arch like that of the windows in the west wall and looks like post-medieval reconstruction, but the eastern seems more authentic with evidence of removed jamb shafts and a badly damaged moulded rear arch.

On the north the two lancet windows (the western largely concealed internally by the organ) seem genuine medieval work, the eastern having a better-preserved moulded rear arch. There has been an internal string course, now cut back, linking their hoodmoulds, and there are also remains of a cut-back string course c 1.5 m above the floor, and at a height of around 4 m, a seeming change from roughly-tooled stone to better-quality squared fabric.

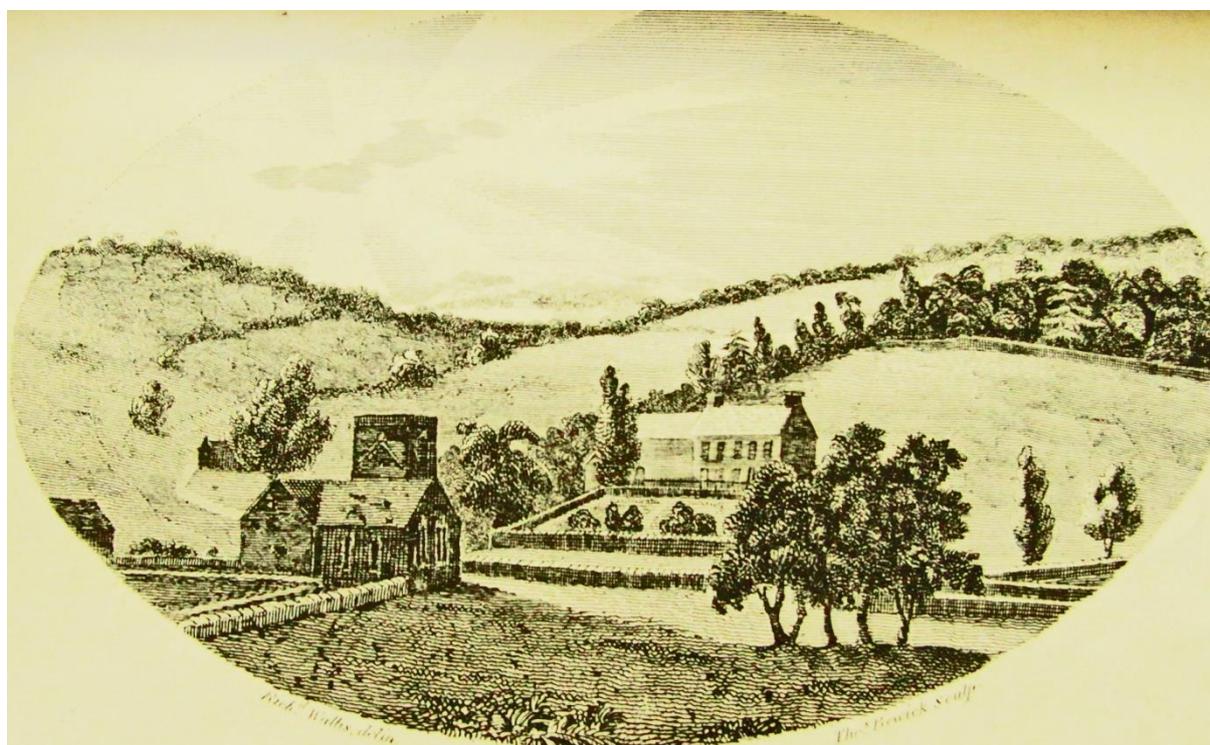
The east wall seems all late-19th century work – old illustration (p.12) show a pair of 18th-century Y-tracery windows here – although some of the stonework towards the north end of the internal off-set c 1m above the floor may be older. Above is a moulded string, and then the three lancet windows set within a five-bay wall arcade that has shafts with moulded capitals and bases carrying richly-moulded arches.

The flat panelled and carved wooden ceiling is an impressive piece of late Victorian work (1881); the oak screen and stalls were installed in 1913. There has been a screen at some time between the transept and the main body of the church; there are sockets for the uprights flanking a doorway in the paving, on the line of the north face of the arch into the transept.

The restored sedilia



The four lancet windows in the side walls of the chancel are of unusual interest through their glazing, which uses zinc comes and frames rather than lead. Each window has 3 or 4 sections, each comprising a number of diamond quarries held in place with T-section zinc comes. Each quarry is mortared to the came, not puttied. It is not certain when they were installed but it was probably in or around 1883, and quite remarkably, ten years before zinc comes and frames are said to have been first developed by Chicago Metallic in association with Frank Lloyd Wright. It appears that such windows in a church context and of such an early date are rare in Britain.



BLANCHLAND CHURCH IN 1802.

Being the title page to "The Happy Village," by the Rev. Richard Wallis.

(From the original copperplate by Thomas Bewick, in the possession of Mr. R. Y. Green.)

Historical Notes and Structural Analysis

1165 Walter de Bolbec founds the abbey, for an abbot and twelve canons, the canons coming from Croxton Abbey in Leicestershire. It is not clear whether there was some sort of ecclesiastical foundation at Blanchland prior to this; one Romanesque capital (now in the garden of the Lord Crewe Arms) is stylistically earlier than anything in the present church,

1327 Edward 1st spends the night of July 31st in the Abbey, preparing to do battle with the Scottish army – an aim in which he was frustrated by the flooded River Wear, which divided the two armies when they eventually located each other. The depredations of the Scots – and the necessity of hosting a visit by the English army, followed a few years later by the Black Death, reduced the abbey to an impoverished state, and various requests for assistance are preserved.

1478-1500 Surviving evidence from Visitations shows that the abbey remained poor; numbers fell to eight, of which three or four would have been living away to serve as vicars of the parishes to which the abbey owned the patronage – Bywell, St Andrew, Heddon on the Wall, and Kirkharle. The abbey buildings were in poor condition, especially the chapter house; the canons went hunting with had a pack of hounds (this was ordered to stop...) and were criticised for spending time with their tenantry.

1536 The Abbey was dissolved along with all monasteries that had a yearly income under £200, but then it was re-founded to be finally dissolved in 1539 when there was an abbot, sub-prior, five canons and two novices.

1545 William Farewell purchases Blanchland; his daughter and widow both later marry Radcliffes, a Jane Radcliffe (d1606) married Nicholas Forster of Bamburgh, and Blanchland passed into the Forsters,

1704 Following the dearth of the last heir of the Forsters, Nathaniel Lord Crewe, Bishop of Durham, purchased the family estates including Blanchland and Bamburgh, and on his death in 1721 they were left with the Crewe Trustees, with which Blanchland remains to this day.

1747 John Wesley preached in the churchyard, writing afterwards that ‘ the little town... is little more than a heap of ruins. There seems to have been a large cathedral church by the vast walls which still remain’.

1752 Blanchland was made into a separate parish; the Trustees fashioned the present church from the ruins of its monastic predecessor, and built a vicarage

1776 The historian Hutchinson found Blanchland a bleak prospect ‘this place looks truly like the realm of mortification.....the towers on each hand converted into ale houses. The buildings which are standing are inhabited by poor people, who are perhaps employed in the leadworks; the distress and ragged appearance of the whole conventual buildings, being most deplorable...

1813-1818 In these years almost £3,500 was spent by the Trustees on repairs and improvements to the village⁶; the general remodelling of the village is often placed in the later 18th century but it could have taken place at this time.

1815 Further improvements made to the church, including a new roof and a paved floor.

1828 Archdeacon Singleton found the village ‘the very gem and emerald of the mining district’ ‘a pet place, a sort of hobby horse of the Lord Crewe’s trustees’ although he did lament the school formed on an upper floor within the north transept of the church.

1854 The eastern aisle of the north transept was rebuilt

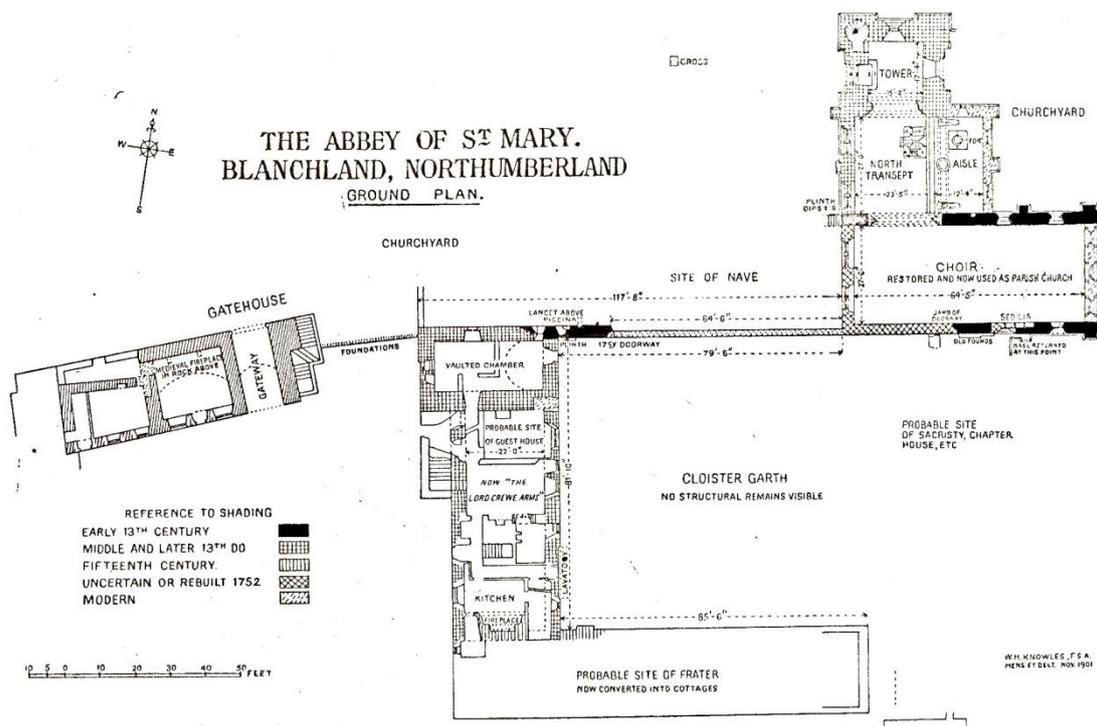
1881 The upper parts of the east end of the church were rebuilt.

1884 New chancel ceiling, costing £236.15s.

1890 Organ and reredos

1913 Screen and seating (Addison 1951, 15)

⁶ Lecture by Jan Williams c2008



It has been questioned whether the 1165 Premonstratensian monastery represents the earliest ecclesiastical foundation on the site. The medieval chronicler Froissart, in his account of the vicissitudes suffered by the house during the Scottish wars, refers to it as ‘a white abbey that had been called from the days of King Arthur the Blance Lande’. This has been dismissed as a confusion with Whitland Abbey (‘white land’ – the same name) in Carmarthenshire, but an earlier origin need not be dismissed out of hand. Knowles conjectured that the fact that he could find no sign whatsoever of pre-13th century might indicate that pre-existing buildings were taken over in 1165. The Romanesque capital (see ‘lapidary material’) seems to have come to light more recently, and would tally with a mid-12th century date. It would appear quite common for the founders of monasteries in the century or so after the Norman Conquest to make no mention of any pre-existing community, so the existence of an early church cannot be ruled out.

The only detailed interpretation of the church published is by W.H.Knowles – interpretation or interpretations, as he produced two accounts, both in 1902, in the pages of the *Archaeological Journal* and also in the *Northumberland County History* (NCH), with quite significant differences between them. In the first

(1902, 330) he states that the first decade of the 13th century ‘may with reasonable safety be taken as the date of the beginning of the work’ and goes on to see transept and tower as added in the middle of the century. In the second he first dates the earlier parts of the church as ‘a little before the middle of the 13th century’ (NCH 331) but lower down the same page amends this to ‘about 1225’; this time he differentiates the building dates of transept and tower, with the former ‘not long after’ the nave and chancel, but the tower as late as c.1300.

There is little architectural detail to allow a close date to be ascribed; it may be safest to see the original church as simply ‘early 13th century’ and the transept and tower – which are clearly of one build⁷ - as being built around the end of the century. The mid-14th century date of the belfry seems to be accepted by all.

After the Dissolution the monastic church was clearly far too large to be taken on by the village, with the result that a small chapel was built against the west side of the tower, and the remainder left to deteriorate into the badly-ruined state in which the Crewe Trustees found it in 1752. Featherstonehaugh (1868, 140) reconstructs its condition then as: ‘The tower was entire⁸, except its porch; the nave destroyed; the transept ruined to below the heads of the two two-light windows, if not further; the chantry gone, its arches still entire, built up; the transept arch probably broken down and set up again from its remains on the ground, which has also evidently been the case with the windows on the south side of the chancel, which had been ruined almost entirely, and the east end completely so, the north wall of the chancel; presenting, in my opinion, the only undisturbed remains of the church of the first and simplest plan’.

It is clear that much medieval work was re-used in the 1752 reconstruction, the result of which was an unusual L-plan building, with a north-south roof over the transept continued to a gable at the west end of the south wall, as can be seen on an 1802 print⁹. The building was re-roofed again in 1815, when was probably the date at which the village school was relocated from a building occupying the site of the post-medieval chapel against the west wall of the tower¹⁰ into the upper part of the transept, and lit by two new windows high in the east wall.

⁷ In addition to the plinth evidence, outlined in the description above, the mouldings of the transept west windows and tower west door are near-identical.

⁸ Hodgson (1902, 336) thought the belfry was quite badly ruined; its east window and parapet are clearly 18th century reconstruction.

⁹ Johnson 1893, f.p.306 (p.12 of this report)

¹⁰ The school seems to have become a house, Johnson (1893, 308) stating that it had been ‘occupied by an ancient dame who is still remembered), suggesting that it survived into the early or mid-19th century.

Then in 1854 the school was removed and the eastern aisle of the transept rebuilt, apparently upon its old foundations.

Archaeological Assessment

Despite its vicissitudes and partial rebuilding this is an important building and one of a relatively small number of monastic churches to remain in use, or, to be more correct, to have been returned to use. The above-ground fabric is largely exposed, and whilst any structural works would obviously require archaeological monitoring, there seems to be little evidence of historic plaster or painting, the walls having been exposed to the elements prior to the 18th-century reconstruction of the building.

It is however highly likely that significant archaeological remains survive beneath the floors of the church, and any disturbance of these will require careful recording. It was probably during the 1881 works that 'a marvellous system of drains devised by the monks' was discovered (Featherstonehaugh 1893, 38); drains in a monastic church seem unlikely so perhaps what was seen were acoustic pits beneath the choir stalls (eg Whalley Abbey).

Outside the church, there are buried remains of the monastic nave in the western part of the churchyard, and of a chapel or sacristy on the east side of the tower; any grave digging in these areas might well expose archaeological material.

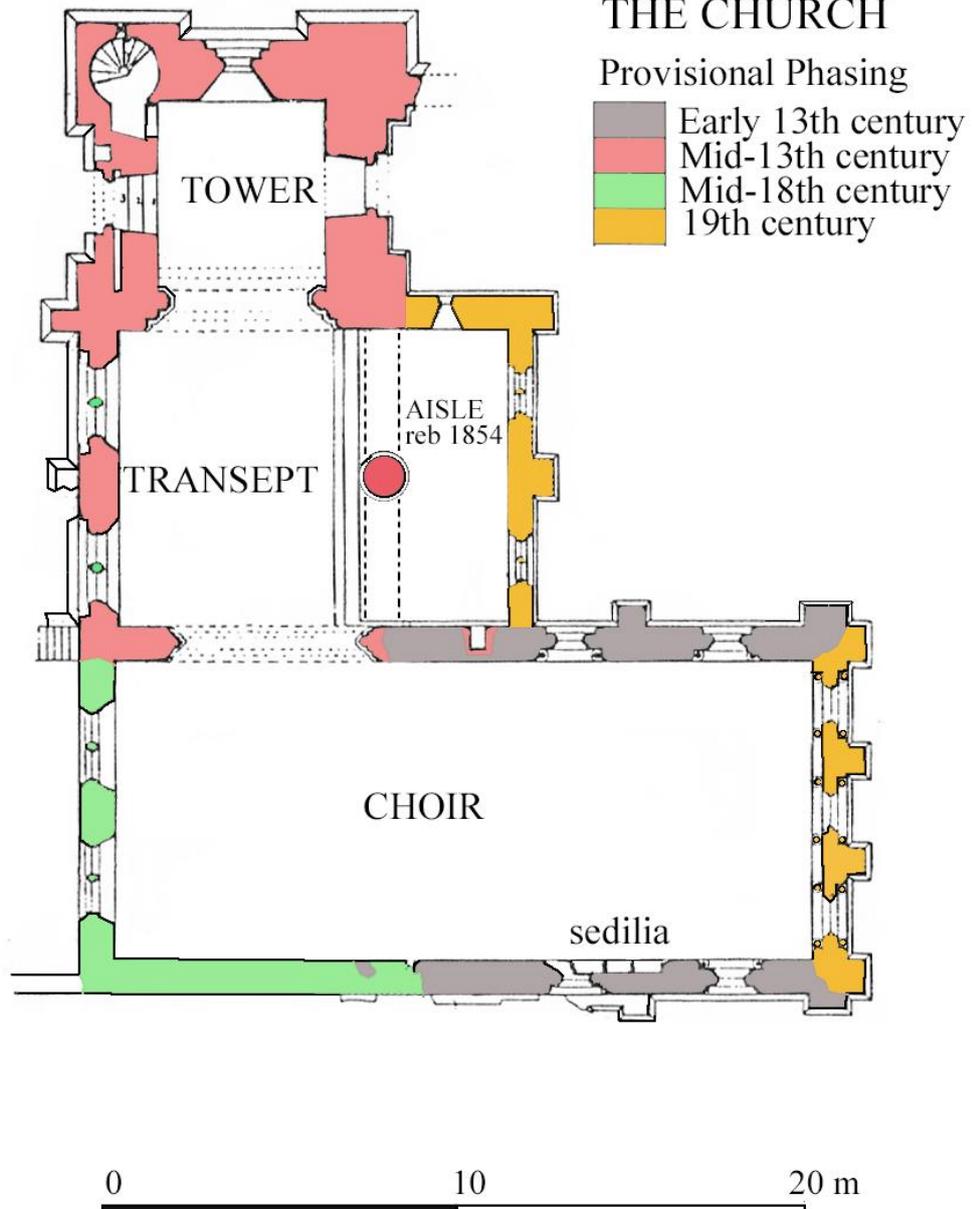
Recommendations

No proper plan of the church seems to have been prepared since Knowles surveyed it in the late 19th century; a modern survey (coupled with the preparation of external and internal elevations) is highly desirable, and would allow the complex fabric to be better understood and interpreted. Knowles' drawings do not include a record of the upper part of the tower, with its unusual features at belfry level; these too require further examination and analysis.

Peter F Ryder 2017

(comment on zinc window comes by Rev Dr Helen Savage)

BLANCHLAND ABBEY THE CHURCH



Sources

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